HB 4059   Grand Rapids Community College release time

- Grand Rapids Community College depends heavily on faculty release time to accomplish institutional goals. At GRCC in the Winter 2012 semester, 40 faculty members worked 263 contact hours of release time. (A contact hour is roughly about three clock hours per week for 15 weeks.)

- GRCC Faculty Association release time is strictly regulated and limited. The contractual limit is 15 hours per semester. In the Winter 2012 semester, only six Faculty Association release time hours were used (the equivalent of just two three-hour college classes) out of over 8,300 total contact hours. Release time is almost always limited to only one person, the Faculty Association President.

- GRCC Faculty Association release time is covered by replacement faculty whose compensation, including FICA and retirement costs, is reimbursed to the college by the Faculty Association. The fiscal impact to the college and the taxpayer is zero.

- GRCC release time is cost effective and efficient because the Faculty Association President spends more than six contact hours per semester on college-wide personnel, contract and academic issues. Without the release time, these issues would either not be addressed or would shift to multiple college administrators who, able as they are, would expend considerable time and effort at a greater cost to the college and taxpayer.

- The GRCC culture is collaborative, and college schedules are flexible so that release time commitments do not interfere with class schedules and student instruction. Release time arrangements have not been developed by and for faculty, but by college administration and faculty for institutional benefit.

- The GRCC Faculty Association is politically independent. Our membership of about 900 is politically diverse.

Submitted May 16, 2012 by:

Fred van Hartesveldt
Professor of English and Faculty Association President
Grand Rapids Community College
143 Bostwick Ave. NE
Grand Rapids, MI 49503
616.234.4356
fvanhart@grcc.edu